

PRINCIPALS' MONTHLY REPORT – FAIRVIEW HIGH SCHOOL

David Park and Dale Lewis –

With contributing reports from teachers, advisors, coaches, and the community.

MONTH: AUGUST 2009 Welcome-back-to-school issue.

The larger the island of knowledge, the longer the shoreline of wonder. ~Ralph W. Sockman

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

Developing the whole student. Achieving excellence in academics, athletics, and the arts.

WELCOME BACK AND NEW STUFF

- Over the summer all locks were removed from the lockers and were reassigned to all students. This was done because there were so many errors discovered. Also, the sophomores will switch locker bays, doing the annual migration of sophomores to the 'mysterious orient' -- the building's east side. This keeps the older students on the building's east side and the younger students closer to the buses which more of them ride. Locker numbers and combinations will be given out on the first day of school.
- We kicked off the third year of the **Kick Off** Program at FHS with mentor training on July 30th. Mr. Ted Wiese trained 42 mentors. All incoming freshmen are assigned an upper-classman as a mentor that will be in contact with them throughout the year. Kick Off Day took place on Wednesday, August 26th from 8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. with over 95% of the freshmen in attendance. The program has proved to be a successful addition in aiding the freshmen transition to the high school.
- Due to the number of new teachers coming to the high school this year, as well as the long length of time since mailboxes were assigned to teachers, all teachers were reassigned new mailboxes. Hopefully, it will be another long while before this needs to be done again!
- Read the new Student Handbook for 2009-2010. Everything you need to know about how the high school operates, what is permitted in terms of behavior, disciplinary consequences, important dates and names of personnel, etc. are there. It is on line at:
<http://www.fairviewschools.org/fsddemo/Handbook%2009-10%20Final.pdf>

Changes that were made to this document will be mailed to you over the summer.

NEW FACULTY

Kristie Shores

Will continue to be a member of our Communications Department. She has worked 1 ½ years as a long-term substitute for Pam Stevens (our CFF coach) so we have gotten a good long look at what she has to offer and we are pleased with what we have seen. She is a graduate of Penn State with a Bachelor of Arts in Communications and Media Studies and has a Master of Education degree in secondary instruction. She continues her education in 21st Century techniques that utilize technology in the classroom.

Malcolm Beall

Will be a member of a few FHS departments depending on our needs. His specialty is computer applications and business. He is also certified in social studies and will soon be certified in Driver's Education. He will be helping us in two areas this year and in a different way next year. Needless to say we appreciate his versatility. Malcolm is a FHS graduate...I taught him a little Spanish back in the dark ages... he then went to Thiel College where he earned his undergraduate degree in Business, continuing on for teacher certification from Mercyhurst. He worked for social programs in Erie such as Stairways Behavioral Health and Sarah Reed Children's Center where he gained many skills that have served him well in dealing with our students.

He has been a popular figure at FHSwell known for his steady hand and solid presence in the Refocus Room these past few years and as a valued coach in football, track, and our conditioning program.

Sara Callan

Graduate of the University of Pittsburgh and Master's Degree in Education from Duquesne University. She is completing a one-year long-term substitute position with the Grapepickers of North East high school where she graduated and her mother is the head of the English department. Sara is dual certified in social studies and communications. She worked at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center as a corporate curriculum developer. Interestingly she served an internship for KDKA radio news department. Sara will join Kristie Shores and others as a member of our Communications Department.

Barb Wegner

Graduate of Maryland Institute College of Art one of the leading art institutions in the country...where she obtained a Bachelor of Fine Arts and a Master of Arts in Teaching. She taught different art media in a high school outside of Columbus, Ohio for six years. Coming to wonderful Pennsylvania she became an instructor of Art Education at Edinboro University where she supervised student teachers and taught how to implement technology in art education. She has also substituted at FMS.

Our new Refocus Room teacher is **Drew Maetz** – Refocus Room teacher – Certified in Elementary Education and Special Education – Anxious to work with older students. Currently in Gannon University Curriculum and Instruction and Principal Certification program. Experience in Erie School District at Emerson Gridley and East High School.

We feel fortunate to have these fine people joining our faculty. They will enrich the learning experience at FHS for tigers of every persuasion.

EDLINE – GRADES AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

Parents,

Start the year out right by getting connected to your student's Edline account. Each parent can access student classes, assignments, and grades by creating their own account. You can also combine accounts if you have students in other buildings. This will allow you to have one login and to see all information in one spot.

In order to do this, you will need an activation code. Incoming freshmen were given parent activation codes on Orientation day. Any parent, who has not sent up an account, may call the library for your activation code or with any questions regarding Edline. 474-2600 ext. 3106 or ext. 3104

KICK OFF MENTORING PROGRAM

With the start of the 2009-10 school year, Fairview High School implemented its third year of a comprehensive transition program for all incoming freshmen. The name of the program is Kick Off and Fairview High School **is the first school in the state of PA to utilize this program.** The great success of this program is due to the energetic and capable leadership of Mrs. Joan Martter and Mrs. Lisa George, as well as the involvement of a wonderful collection of specially selected upperclassmen as mentors.

Kick Off combines the use of:

- Upper-class student mentors for EVERY incoming freshman
- An day-long interactive orientation for freshmen before the start of school
- Year-long mentor connections between mentors and freshmen

Studies indicate schools using this program have been able to reduce absenteeism and drop-out rates, decrease discipline referrals, and improve academic performance.

Forty-eight mentors participated in a day-long training session over the summer to prepare them for their activities and responsibilities.

All freshmen were invited to attend the Kick Off Day Orientation on August 26th. Over 94% of the freshmen attended. The unique aspect of the program is that it is a year long relationship between the freshmen and the mentors. Mentors are required to have three informal contacts (phone call, text message, note in locker, birthday card, lunch together, etc.) every month with their freshmen. In addition to the contacts there will be six mini-lessons conducted by the mentors on subjects ranging from bullying, to time management, to how to study for finals.

This year we also included new students who are not freshmen. Two mentors were assigned to care for these students and toured the new students around the school and answered all their questions. They will continue to make contact with these students throughout the school year.

“Finis origine pendet”

(“The end depends on the beginning.”) Manlius, Roman Poet

SUMMER COSTA RICA TRIP FOR SPANISH STUDENTS

On June 6 at 1:00 am, a group of eleven Fairview juniors and seniors left Fairview and headed south to Costa Rica. For nine days, these students, accompanied by Mrs. Christine Groff and Ms. Carol Byler, explored a wide variety of sites and participated in a range of activities. After a brief exploration of the capital city, San Jose, we met our guide, Gerardo Lopez and the other two school groups with whom we would travel. We saw an inactive volcano crater. The students climbed down to see a waterfall near by and had a chance to swim in the pool formed by the waterfall. The next day, we were able to see an active volcano and watch the lava flowing down its north face while sailing on a boat on a made made lake near the volcano. Another day we visited a tropical rain forest and zipped along cables from one layer of the rainforest to another. The students had a chance to whitewater raft in the Sarapiquí River and snorkel in the Caribbean. We hiked through another tropical rainforest near the ocean and visited a small butterfly sanctuary. We went to two nature preserves where students saw snakes, lizards, iguanas, sloths, anteaters, tropical birds, peccaries and a caiman. We experienced the mild high plateau weather as well as the hot, humid tropical weather of the coastal area. We drove through the cool rain cloud national forest on our return to San Jose.

As astounding as these sites were, it was the smaller scale events that our guide arranged that made the trip very special. We stopped to listen to roadside vendors talk about how they make a subsistence living and we got to taste their produce. The students purchased school supplies and we visited an elementary school where they had a chance to talk one on one with the students. Our students were very moved to see how primitive the schools there are and how little the Costa Rica students have. Our students were like Pied Pipers with the small Costa Rica students swarming around eager to get the pencils, pens, and notebooks that we had purchased. Through the Spanish Club, the students hope to make it a project to provide school supplies to this school next Fall.

The students had a very positive experience in Costa Rica and this trip has opened their eyes to a wider global community that is their future. They have seen that they have a lot to learn in order to be able to communicate effectively in another culture. They can also see that much needs to be done in other nations to help them economically. But, they have also learned that these developing nations have much to offer us as well. Hopefully, for all of them, this trip has given them a greater appreciation for their own country, and it will have been the first of many travel experiences. They very much appreciated the opportunity to travel to Costa Rica. SEE NEXT MONTH'S PRINCIPALS' REPORT FOR SOME INDIVIDUAL REPORTS FROM STUDENTS.

SUPPORT STAFF

Special recognition to Mr. Dennis Kruse, Head Custodian. A Fairview High School graduate of 1972 Mr. Kruse is proud of his knowledge of and attention to the care of this facility. He has been employed in the district since 1976 and has been assigned to the high school since 1984. He works with a staff of dedicated people who are broken up into three shifts (many people do not realize that there are personnel at work in the building all night getting everything ready for the next day). Mr. Kruse knows Fairview history backwards and forwards, enjoys the company of our students, takes care of staff's needs, and is affectionately known as the “Commissioner Of Baseball”. Catch him in one of his multi-colored tee shirts as he endeavors to keep our building in tip-top shape.

RACHEL'S CHALLENGE PRESENTATION

Mark your calendars now for this extremely valuable and important event! The district is proud to present a community evening assembly on Thursday, October 1 - **Rachel's Challenge**. Rachel Scott was the first person killed in the Columbine massacre-the worst high school shooting in U.S. history. Rachel's brother, Craig, a survivor and witness to the shootings will lead this life altering presentation. Craig was in the school library where ten classmates were killed and over twenty wounded. After witnessing two of his friends murdered next to him, Craig led a group of students out of the school. Later that day, he would discover that his sister, Rachel, was also dead.

The one hour presentation combines video and audio footage of Rachel's life and the Columbine tragedy that motivates viewers to truly consider the way they treat others.

Several administrators, educators and parents have already seen this presentation and can attest to it's impact. You will want to discuss this program with your children who will be seeing different versions of the program at the high school and the middle school. This is an evening that will stay with you for a long time - again, schedule it into your plans. The presentation is open to the public. Invite your friends and relatives. We promise you will not regret coming to this life changing event.

On Thursday, October 1 at 7:00 p.m. Craig Scott will present the Rachel's Challenge assembly program to all students and staff on campus in the FHS auditorium.

Rachel's Challenge is a non-violence school program which incorporates various aspects of character development and anti-bullying themes with powerful audio/video footage. This one-hour presentation holds students spell-bound and then motivates students to seek positive change in the way they treat others. (Each assembly is modified and is age appropriate for each building). At the middle school and high school level, the assembly will be followed by a 45 minute peer mentoring training session involving selected faculty and students. To sustain the positive climate change in our school, a year long curriculum called the Friends of Rachel (FOR) program continues training students throughout the year and plugs them into activities that continue the *chain reaction of kindness*.

CLASS RANK

Class rank policy was changed effective August 2009.

1. **There is no published class rank for this year's freshmen and sophomores at FHS.** We will put N/A on all of their transcripts for the class rank category. All students would have the option of not including the rank on their transcripts.
2. **A weighted GPA order is maintained** but FHS **only** gives a student's **position** on that list DIRECTLY to the official sources if they request it. (Note: This allows us to provide a GPA for transfer students too). In the new system A's for an unweighted course are awarded a 4, A's for honors courses are a 5, and A's for AP courses are 5.25. This provides some distinction for the three levels of rigor of studies. (B's would break down as: 3, 4, and 4.25, with the other grades descending accordingly).
3. **A weighted and unweighted GPA will appear** on transcripts and report cards for each semester.
4. **There is no valedictorian / salutatorian honor.** Instead we have instituted a Latin (college style) honors system as follows:
 - Everyone with a 4.6 weighted G.P.A. or higher is a *summa cum laude* distinction. [NOTE: 5 students among 2008-2009 seniors – also 5 students last year.]
 - Everyone with a G.P.A. of 4.25 – 4.59 is a *magna cum laude* distinction. [NOTE: 10 students at among 2008-2009 seniors]
 - Everyone with a 3.75 – 4.24 is *cum laude* distinction. [NOTE: 17 students among 2008-2009 seniors]
5. **Anyone attaining a level of *summa cum laude* will be invited to speak at the commencement** ceremony, with an option to decline, and one additional speaker will be selected by students (as has been the practice in the past). (All student speakers must exhibit satisfactory attendance and behavior as determined by the administration).

SPECIAL NOTES

- Any additional classes taken **will be counted** for the student's weighted GPA record. These classes may be college level or not and will be credited accordingly in FHS records. (We are aware that it is possible that taking any extra course on the outside may raise the GPA if the student received an A, but it would also be possible to lower the GPA. The change up or down caused by a single course will be small, affecting the score by mere hundredths of a decimal point. We are of the belief that the student who is willing to do the extra work for the purpose of enrichment, and accept the 'risk' of getting a lower grade, should be rewarded in this way. [A student who wants credit for these additional 'outside' courses must seek approval from the administration in advance so that the course may be entered in our data system].

- 11th graders may be waived out of the SAT Prep/ Wellness class if SAT preparation is not desired by the parent/student AND CPR/wellness objectives have been met elsewhere.

Juniors will be encouraged to stay at FHS for the core courses. However, 11th graders may substitute courses at different locations for FHS core courses (English, Science, Math, and Social Studies). Preapproval is required and an official record of grades must be submitted at the end of the course. The same level of weight (for grades) would be given for like courses. Example: A student who substitutes a U.S. Government and Politics courses at a college campus for FHS' Honors Government and Economics class would receive honors weight for the course – as opposed to AP weight (which is given for college courses for our RCI students).

Students at FHS must continue to have a minimum of 8 credits per year of courses.

- Our honors proposal would allow students to take unweighted courses in an area of interest, such as music, journalism, art and/or receive a B or two in a high school career and still reach the *summa cum laude* distinction (given that a sufficient number of AP and honors courses were taken and good grades maintained in them). The intense 'chase' that we currently have does not give our students the luxury of doing this – hence the constant and intense pressure to get **only** A's and **only** take the highest weighted courses. We believe we should provide an opportunity for students to investigate some 'non-academic' interests to become more well-rounded – as well as providing for a possible influx of our top students into the fine arts classes.

The timeline for the phased in policy is:

Description Of Transition Phases
2010 - This year's seniors <i>Choice of having class rank on the transcript or N/A. Class rank would be the current system of calculation. Institute cum laude honors system at graduation WITH THE NEW WEIGHTED GPA multipliers (from 9th grade on). Maintain valedictorian and salutatorian system.</i>
2011 This year's juniors <i>Choice of having class rank on the transcript or N/A. Class rank would now be based on weighted GPA for every student (to allow for more flexibility in scheduling). Continue cum laude honors system at graduation. No selection of valedictorian or salutatorian.</i>
2012 This year's sophomores and incoming freshmen <i>Full implementation of the proposal. N/A is put on all transcripts. No class rank for publication. Private communication as necessary with universities and scholarship officers. Continue cum laude honors system at graduation. No selection of valedictorian or salutatorian.</i>

MAINTENANCE

Kudos go to this important group of individuals under the supervision of Mr. David Muye. His crews are busily involved in getting the buildings all ready for opening as well as maintaining the fields and courts for our fall sports activities. Thank you to both maintenance and custodial employees for having our buildings shiny and bright and in great repair as we commence the new year.

RECYCLING CLUB

The FHS recycling club is now under the supervision of Mrs. Daley. She reports that we should look for lots of exciting new things to come. She has “tons of ideas”, and has talked to Superintendent Kincade about the students working with him on the Tiger Trail and various other ‘green projects’.

STUDENTS OF THE MONTH

This is a distinction that occurs once in the entire high school career for a special group of students who are selected for what they offer the school in terms of academics, athletics, arts, school service, and personality. These students are selected via a monthly nomination and voting process by faculty, support staff, and administrators at FHS. Congratulations to those who have been chosen in the past, and best wishes to all students in the running for the future years.

WEBSITE

This continues to be the site for all things pertaining to life at the high school.
<http://www.fairviewhighschool.wikispaces.com>



The teacher who is indeed wise does not bid you to enter the house of his wisdom, but rather leads you to the threshold of your mind. ~Kahlil Gibran



PJAS Update

Students of all levels, 7th grade through 12th grade, applied through honors and AP, are encouraged to participate in the Regional Pennsylvania Junior Academy of Science competition. Registration process begins in October, while the regional competition is on a Saturday in February. Students under the guidance of the FHS PJAS advisor, Mrs. Magraw and the FMS PJAS advisor will independently design, conduct, and report on an experiment of their personal interest. Preliminary consultations will begin in September.

Please feel free to contact Mrs. Magraw with your ideas, concerns and questions. With approval of the procedure, it is a great idea to get started now in order to avoid the rush and demand for time once the school year gets underway. (Please avoid any investigations using live animals or pyrotechnics.) (There could be exceptions but they require direct supervision and approval by the regional committee.)

Those who have participated in the past are encouraged to continue as there are awards for perseverance. Continuation of previously investigated areas is a great way for students to emulate science in a manner much like it is conducted in universities by Ph.D. scientists. As Juniors or Seniors, the students will also have several opportunities to apply and interview for scholarships and cash awards.

For all students, especially the younger ones, PJAS is a wonderful opportunity to pursue an interest in science beyond the classroom experience.

Email for Mrs. Magraw [cmagraw@fairview.iu5.org]

More info [<http://www.pjasix.org/state/projectinfo.html>]

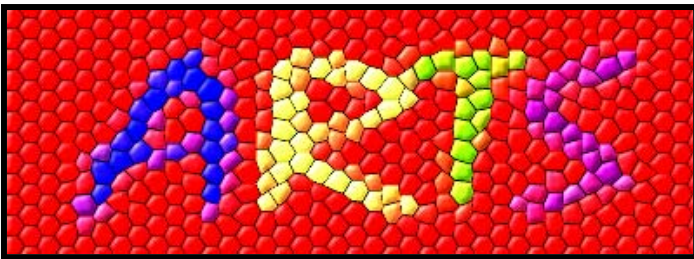
ATTENTION: Fall Earth/Space Science Students from Mrs. Magraw

Be on the watch for night time sky events such as Meteor Showers and Moon Phases through out the rest of August. You'll be asked to journal your observations for class as well as any weather experiences you have in this next week. All observations are valuable candidates for entries made to your journal which will be scored once a month throughout the semester. Note the date and time of your experience. Use your camera to record exceptional views, or any views for that matter. I look forward to seeing you soon and look forward to seeing what you've seen.

WORLD LANGUAGE

CLUBS

The Spanish and French clubs will be participating in their combined fundraiser in September. Cookie dough will be sold and delivered the following month. More details to follow.



Some student photo composition work:

J. Mark Graham



Derick Fiedler



Amanda Lawson

STUDENT COUNCIL

This year's student council officers are:

Phil Sundin - President

Rachel Tallmadge - Vice President

Nathan Brinling - Treasurer

TJ Masters - Secretary

Hannah Susko - Recorder

KEY CLUB ACTIVITIES

Key Club members continued to volunteer over the summer.

Projects include: Ice Cream Social at the Sturgeon House - July 15th

Relay for Life - July 24th and 25th

Tour de West County Bike Tour (Lance Amrstrong fundraiser) - July 25th

Vacation Bible School at St. Stephen's Church - August 3rd - August 7th

PSSA TEST RESULTS

Test results for math, reading, and writing tests taken by our 2008-2009 junior class are in and they are impressive. They show an improvement rate of approximately 10%, far more than we could have anticipated. Thanks are in order for all of the hard work done by faculty and students to get prepared for this critical assessment.



MUSIC BOOSTERS

Whether your child sings in chorus, plays an instrument in band, or you love the sound of music, then we encourage you to join the Music Boosters in supporting our youth of the Fairview School District. As a Music Booster, we provide parties to our 4th grade instrumentalist, give Fairview blankets & scholarships to graduating seniors and we purchase uniforms & drill expenses for the Marching Band. The Music Boosters span all three schools encouraging and recognizing students who participate in the music and marching band programs. Please support our efforts with your time, ideas, and/or membership dues. Meetings are held every 1st Tuesday of the month at 7:00 pm in the FHS Band room. We hope to see you there!! Membership forms are located in the offices of each school. You can also pick a form up at a booster meeting or print one off our website (sites.google.com/site/fmboosters).

PATS

PATS (Parents, Administrators, Teachers and Students) will hold their first meeting of the year on September 2nd, at 9:00 in the high school library. We begin the year with two of our largest endeavors for the upcoming school year: our annual membership drive and our Yankee Candle sale. Our goal for membership is to obtain 100% parent participation and the candle sale is our ONLY fundraiser of the year. The funds that PATS raises are used to help defray the costs that students who participate academic clubs encounter, support teacher requests for additional teaching supplies, provide scholarships to graduating seniors and support Prom to Dawn along with many other worthwhile activities. Without parental time, talent and financial support none of these would be possible. We are looking forward to a terrific school year and hope to see many new faces.

ATHLETICS

DIVING AWARD

On June 15, 2009, Danny Roberts was awarded the honor of being named an All American Diver for 2009 . He is one of only 130 divers across the United States that was awarded this honor. Very few freshmen earn this designation. Congratulations, Danny!

The PIAA fall sports season officially started August 17th. Many teams attended workouts and camps during the summer months to prepare for the start of the season. Scrimmages were held at the end of the first week of practice. The regular season begins once the school year begins.

Fall programs include football, girls' volleyball, boys' golf, cross country, girls' tennis, and boys' and girls' soccer. Girls' water polo is considered a "Club Sport".

ATTENDANCE

We tell our students that attendance matters in the equation to determine their ultimate high school performance. About 97% of our students at FHS understand this fully and are not a problem. The remaining 3% we seem to have to 'chase' all year. Whatever parents are able to do to get your son/daughter to school on time will be greatly appreciated. Being here does make a positive difference toward their overall success. The following article indicates that in the work world – attendance also is considered when judging overall performance. Here is an excerpt:

What is the Importance of Having a Good Attendance Record?

January 08, 2009 by **Aaron Tadeo** _ AssociatedContent.com

Attendance is usually the top priority when it comes to an employee's performance. It usually has a higher weight compared to other metrics such as productivity and quality. But some may not understand the importance of having a good attendance record and what implications it could have if an employee is always out of work.

The best trait an employee could probably have in any company is their dependability and the main factor in being dependable is attendance. It's pretty simple as the question, "How can a company depend on someone who isn't at work?" A lot of managers would probably say that they'd rather have someone who is performing average and who is always present at work than someone who really excels at what he/she does but is absent every week.

Another important thing to remember about attendance is the importance of learning...If an employee isn't constantly at work, he/she may not be able to catch up with updates and it could very well affect the quality of his/her work.

DISCIPLINE

Behavior and discipline philosophy and goals

The primary goal of the school is to offer its students the best education possible in a safe and secure environment. This goal may only be achieved when student behavior and the general school atmosphere allows teachers to teach and students to learn without the disruption of inappropriate behavior.

In order to achieve this goal, a well-defined set of behavioral limits, consequences and procedures must be established and understood by everyone involved with the school. The primary objective of a behavior policy is the reinforcement of positive behavior.

Students must accept and acknowledge that they have a choice between appropriate and inappropriate behavior. When they choose to exceed the defined limits, they must accept the disciplinary consequences of that choice.

Disciplinary consequences are not punishments but the earned result of inappropriate behavior. The objective of any disciplinary action is the correction of unacceptable behavior. Students must be informed of what kind of behavior is expected in the future.

The primary responsibility for classroom discipline rests with the classroom teacher. The teacher must establish and enforce consistent and justifiable behavioral limits as well as general school rules within the classroom and reinforce positive behavior. In addition, the teacher must assume the responsibility of helping to enforce school-wide limits outside the classroom. Teachers will hand out classroom rules to students during the first week of class.

The administration has the primary responsibility for establishing and enforcing school-wide behavioral limits and supporting the teachers in their efforts to maintain classroom discipline.

Parents have the responsibility to be aware of the school's behavior code and to work with the school to reinforce appropriate behavior. Communication between the school and the home must be open and supportive in both directions. Early intervention and parent contact are primary goals of our discipline philosophy.

We are firmly committed to the belief that good discipline originates in the home. The parent is the first teacher of his/her child and should guide him/her in developing good behavior habits and proper attitudes toward school.

Students have the responsibility to be familiar with the limits and consequences defined in our code and to behave in a positive manner.